

# Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council Community Engagement Statement

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## **Aims and Examples of How We Try To Fulfil Them**

### **To ensure that the Parish Council is fully representative of its community.**

- Residents are encouraged to stand for election or cooption by notices on the notice boards and the web-site, articles in the Whatton Parish Council Newsletter (Whatton News) and word of mouth.
- When co-opting councillors an important consideration is that the Parish Council should represent as much of the geographical area of the parish, length of residence etc as possible.
- Questionnaires are distributed and consultation meetings are held whenever appropriate.
  - Anti-social behaviour meeting (jointly with Aslockton Parish Council)
  - East Midlands Trains meeting (jointly with Aslockton Parish Council)
  - Police Survey
  - East Midlands Train Survey
  - Housing Needs Survey
- Planning Applications are fully discussed at Parish Council Meetings and interested residents are encouraged to attend and voice their views.

### **To ensure that members of the community know how they can contact councillors and that they feel comfortable doing so.**

- Contact details for councillors and clerk available on the Newsletter, annual report, web-site and notice boards.
- Councillors are well-known in the parish and always willing to discuss residents' concerns personally or by phone or email.
- Regular 'Surgeries' held at the Jubilee Hall, Church Street which are attended by at least one Councillor.

### **To ensure that members of the community know what the Parish Council is doing on their behalf.**

- Minutes of all meetings posted on notice boards and web-site.
- Regular information provided via Newsletters, web-site and notice boards.
- Chairman's annual report given verbally at Annual Parish Meeting and delivered to each household in writing.

### **To ensure that members of the community know how they can influence the decisions of the Parish Council in a democratic manner.**

- Notices of meetings include an invitation to the public session
- Residents attending the public session welcomed by the chairman and invited to contribute
- Procedures always explained to members of the public who attend meetings.
- Information as appropriate is put in the newsletter and on the web-site.

## **To ensure that, when appropriate, the wishes of the community are passed on to other authorities and agencies.**

- Clerk in regular contact with Rushcliffe Borough and Nottinghamshire County Councils.
- Clerk acts on decisions of Parish Council meetings, where possible, within one week of the meeting taking place.
- Parish Council represented on bodies such as Police liaison Local Area Group, Whatton and Aslockton Playing Field Committee.
- Regular contact with Aslockton Parish Council on issues of mutual concern.

## **How Are We Doing?**

### **Healthy Signs are:**

- There are enough candidates to fill the seats at election time.
- There is always more than one person interested when it is necessary to co-opt a councillor following a mid-term resignation.
- Attendance of councillors at meetings is very good – average 7 out of 7.
- Attendance of members of the public at meetings is typically low: neighbours almost always come in connection controversial planning applications.
- All councillors and the clerk get frequent phone calls and emails from residents and deal with them promptly
- Positive responses, both verbal and in writing from residents on the work of the Parish Council

### **Not so good:**

- Despite wide publicity, attendance at Annual Parish meetings is typically low.
- Public attendance at Council Meeting is typically low, unless there is a controversial issue.

## **How Can We Do Better?**

- Ways need to be found to increase attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting and Council meetings.

April 2009.